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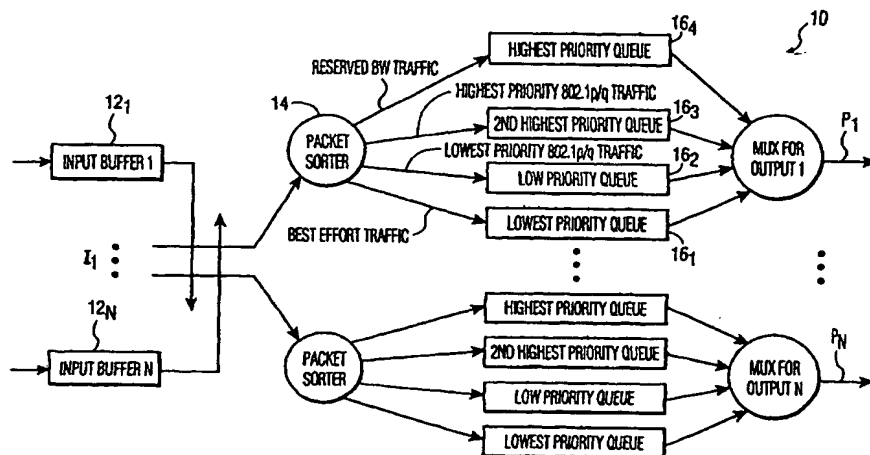
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(54) Title: MECHANISM FOR PROVIDING QUALITY OF SERVICE IN A NETWORK UTILIZING PRIORITY AND RESERVED BANDWIDTH PROTOCOLS



(57) Abstract: An apparatus for providing reserved connections between end stations, in a network, such as the Internet (504), capable of providing prioritized communications, comprises a switch in packet communication with end stations. The switch detects and forwards packets that contain prioritized data for priority processing, and packets that include requests for reserved connections according to a given reservation protocol. Output queues associated with egress ports of the switch correspond to different priorities associated with received priority packets. An additional output queue is associated with reserved connection data packets. In response to a reserved connection request, the switch determines if sufficient bandwidth exists in the switch to establish a reserved path within the network, and if so, allocates the bandwidth for the reserved connection. In response to each received packet, the switch determines whether the packet is associated with the reserved connection and forwards those packets to the additional output queue on the egress port associated with the reserved connection path for transport to the intended destination.